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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

## INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Gruzinskaya SSR)

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SUBJECT Tbilisi Factory Airfield

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1. The factory field east of the aircraft plant had a 66 x 2,500-foot concrete runway which was being extended to a total length of 4,000 feet. The 1,500-foot section under construction was excavated to a depth of three feet, filled with broken stones, rolled and given a four-inch cement surface.

2. An average of 30 turbo-jet fighters, manufactured in the aircraft plant, was parked at both sides of the flight control station (16 x 66 x 330 feet with tower and windcone) on the southern edge of the field. About three of these aircraft were test flown every day.

3. Description of turbo jet fighters (see Annex):

a. Propulsion: One cylindrical jet power plant set under front section of fuselage and extending from nose (air intake) as far as one third aft of leading edge of wing. Jet mouth in clearly discernible fuselage step. Turbine, from 32 to 34 inches in diameter, filled the entire front compartment of nose. Intake aperture protected by fine-meshed wire grid, behind grid a multi-bladed propeller. A roller, 20 mm in diameter from rear to intake at front section to center of turbine. Discharge orifice under front third of wing. Started by two-cycle engine set in front of pilot seat, as inferred from the engine noise.

b. Wings: Low-wing monoplane, not swept back but dihedral, leading edge tapering to the rear, straight trailing edge, rounded tips maximum span of 30 feet (same as Me-108), individual wing 13 feet as far as fuselage, wing chord at root five feet, at tip 32 inches.

c. Tail unit: Single rudder assembly forming tail of fuselage, straight elevator assembly fitted near bottom of fuselage in line with rudder assembly but terminating before rudder tail.

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d. Landing gear: Two wheels set in front third of wing and retracting outward into wing, wheel space about six feet. Nose wheel in front third of fuselage, retracting rearward. Wheels hydraulically operated. No tail wheel.

e. Fuselage: Cigar-shaped, length: 30 feet, one third extending from nose to mid-wing, two thirds from mid-wing to tail. Diameter about 3 feet. Tortoise-shaped, glazed, two-place cockpit raising above fuselage by from 15 to 20 inches, beginning at leading edge of wings, ending eight inches aft of trailing edge.

f. Armament: Two rigid machine guns of 76.5 mm caliber, gun mouths 24 inches from fuselage; one rigid 20-mm gun, in mid-intake aperture. One bomb-release mechanism for two light bombs, set under wings close to fuselage, not on all planes).

g. Paint and inscription: Fuselage sky blue, Soviet star emblem, about 12 inches in diameter, white with red rim, on both sides of tail and, 32 inches in diameter, on last (outer) third section of bottom side of wing. Russian letters and figures beside stars on underside of wings toward fuselage. Insignia (angles and stripes) on fuselage forward of cockpit and leading edge of wing.

h. Other features: One antenna leading from mid-cabin to rudder assembly. Antenna rod about 12 inches high.

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Comment:

a. The expansion of the runway has been repeatedly reported; the total length varying between 4,000 and 5,000 feet. The detailed description of the turbo-jet fighter type does not completely agree with a later sketch. More value should be attached to the description than to the sketch, which is to be considered only as a supplement to the reported features.

b. According to the description, the turbine is set under the nose with a clearly discernible fuselage step, which is not correctly reproduced on the sketch. The intake reported is considered too high. The wire grid serving as a filter against impurities, though reported for the first time, is considered credible. This is the first time that a cockpit starter is clearly reported.

c. The description of the landing gear seems to be correct. The arrangement of the seats, with the second seat facing the rear, has been previously reported. This indicates that a model of this Yak type is apparently being used as ground attack or fighter bomber aircraft. This assumption is also supported by the reported bomb-release mechanism for two bombs.

1 Annex: Turbo-jet fighter type observed at the Tbilisi factory airfield.

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